



## MEETING SUMMARY

### CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN UPDATE 2013

#### FLOOD CAUCUS

11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

815 S STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA

### Meeting Objectives

1. Review Flood Future Report (FFR) components.
2. Discuss framework of 2024 Flood Resource Management Strategy (RMS).

### Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

The Flood Caucus met on June 4, 2012 to discuss the Progress Report for the flood objective. Introductions were made around the room and on the phone. Terri Wegener opened the meeting and welcomed all participants, reviewing the agenda and moving into the first presentation.

### Review of Caucus Activities

A brief recap was provided of upcoming caucus activities, which includes the following

- Develop Flood RMS for Update 2013 and identify links to other RMS chapters
- Review flood components within Regional Reports
- Review how flood management is addressed in Volume 1, including recommendations and vision
- Provide input on the FFR
- Develop the Progress report for Update 2009 and review other work products for update 2013, including the Finance Plan.

Flood RMS and other works products will incorporate the work products associated with the FFR. A timeline was provided for the FFR and key deliverables for the Flood Caucus. There is a substantial workload and staff and consultant will be assisting with the Caucus deliverable

### Review of Draft Flood Future Report (FFR) Technical Memoranda (TM)

Terri Wegener recapped that the FFR will address the following:

- Inventory existing flood infrastructure
- Assess risk and exposure to flooding
- Identify challenges and opportunities for flood management, especially in the context of integrated flood management (IFM) and integrated water management (IWM)
- Identify funding options
- Develop recommendations to guide flood risk management policies and investments



## **FFR Technical Memoranda (TM)**

Currently, three TM have been posted online: Information Gathering, Exposure to Flood Hazard, Flood Management in the Context of IFM. Approximately 100 comments have been submitted on the TM. The comments did not represent show-stoppers and will be helpful in revising the next draft. The TM can be accessed at: <https://sfmp.water.ca.gov/web/guest/public-outreach>.

Some examples were provided of the types of information contained in the TM on Exposure to Flood Hazard, which includes data obtained from the CVFPP to flooding. The TM displays the extent of exposure within the 100- and 500-year floodplains for: population, structural values, crop values, number of critical facilities, number of Department of Defense facilities and acreage of Tribal trust lands. This information is conveyed through text, tables and graphics.

The Information Gathering TM highlights the outreach process and issues that surfaced. Specifically, the FFR team visited with flood management entities in each county. Through those discussions, several key themes emerged:

- Financing issues: Propositions 218 and 30 have dramatically impacted revenues. Flood management costs are extensive and represent a wide range of authorities.
- There is a wide-range of flood management agencies throughout the state, with disconnects between different authorities for land use, flood management/risk and emergency response and planning.
- Agencies are interested in coordination for planning and permitting of projects, including operation and management considerations.
- Participation by flood managers in IRWM processes do not necessarily represent and IFM approach.
- 900 future projects were identified, which does not necessarily capture the total need.

The IFM TM discusses both structural and non-structural approaches to flood management, taking a systems perspective. This encompasses considerations such as land use, watershed stewardship and land use planning. IFM solutions represent the intersection of stakeholder interests, technical viability and economic factors. Implementation hurdles for IFM include climate change and sea-level rise, as well competing land uses on floodplains, funding, planning horizons and coordination on regulation, permitting and O & M. Almost 300 planned projects with IFM elements were identified, with an estimated cost of \$7.2 billion.

## **Discussion, Questions**

Question: How many projects are part of an IRWM project?

Response: The team looked at IRWMPs. The IFM projects may have been identified from IRWMs or other agency sources. Of the 900 total projects, 279 are IWM/IFM.

Clarification: Terri Wegener noted that management actions in the IFM RMS considered and expanded the management activities of the CVFPP. The team is also looking at whether some of the management actions can be broken out into a land use category.



Comment: There should be a definition of “land use.” Some definitions are specific to city and county land use authorities. It can be used more broadly in terms of specific uses of the land. The State has different role in different situations.

Comment: The Land Use RMS defines land use in terms of city and county planning and land use regulation.

Questions: How will sustainability be incorporated?

Response: The environmental piece is hard to quantify, and the team is looking at a more qualitative and narrative discussion.

Bruce: Land use and sustainability. #6 and 7 of recommendations – how can these incorporate recommendations of the Strategic Growth Council, which is funding local and regional sustainability planning? OPC suggested using sea-level rise as a threshold to be reviewed for grants. The sustainability community planning grants don’t link to flood – this should be explored and brought to the group.

## Draft FFR Recommendations

Terri Wegener explained that the FFR recommendations were developed under the overarching theme of IWM. Specifically, consideration was given to how IFM fits into IWM. Two approaches for better coordinating IFM and IWM include better agency alignment and leveraging multiple funding options. This would include programs such as the sustainability community planning grants.

The actions associated with each recommendation reflect tiers of project sponsorship: local; local-State; or local-State-Federal. The actions also represent a multi-stage implementation approach, including both short- and long-term actions. It was noted that this version of the recommendations represents a pre-release draft that could change dramatically, and should not be widely distributed. Comments need to be submitted by June 15<sup>th</sup> for inclusion in the Administrative Draft to be released later this summer.

## Discussion

Comment: Environmental stewardship is an essential component to IWM and is not represented on the recommendations graphic. Environmental stewardship is more than responsible land use. The loss of riparian forests – and related stewardship and restoration efforts – is not a part of land use. Environmental stewardship is an integral part of the IFM solution and will help deal with the permitting and funding problem.

Comment: The recommendations graphic is confusing. Reducing flood risk seems to overshadow the other components. Does the mixing of these components reduce flood risk? The Environmental Stewardship is an overarching element that should be reflected all the way through. The question is how to best represent that concept.



Comment: For actions where no local component is identified, at a minimum there should language around incorporating local input.

The list of FFR Draft Recommendations was reviewed as a whole and included the following:

Foundational Elements:

#1: **Facilitate and direct agency alignment to expedite priority projects.** Potential action items, for DWR, ACE and local agencies include: developing regional flood planning areas; and establishing regional working groups to streamline project permitting, planning and implementation. Regional flood planning areas were proposed, that are a bit different from the IRWM boundaries, to better reflect flood distinctions and watershed systems. These planning areas will inform priority projects.

## Discussion

Comment: In Upper and Central Sacramento, local land use planning is present in the footprint of those areas. There are major interests in Southern California who have interests in protecting infrastructure in the Central Valley. How does that get taken into addressed in the context of local land use planning, reclamation districts and beneficiary pays? Protection of local assets must be done in a comprehensive manner.

Comment: There are links between the Delta and LA Basin. It might be helpful to have an overlay of different regional links to an area.

Comment: There are some concerns about alignment of permitting and regulatory agencies. This requires a balanced approach. Federal regulatory agencies exist to protect the resource. Permitting delays may be a good thing for improving bad projects. Flood management agencies need to plan projects to mitigate resources.

Comment: We don't want to pay agencies more to permit faster. The final product must be a quality outcome. Agency responsiveness cannot be linked this strongly.

Comment: Flood agencies and entities responsible for flood management are looking for the streamlining component and not circumventing environmental requirements. This needs to be stated as such. The idea of agency alignment does not seem directly related to streamlining permits. The public expectation for agency alignment is likely to be more along the lines of agency program alignment. There are flood reduction components in urban stream restoration. There are 4-6 departments in DWR that have programs addressing flood risk reduction, including IRWM, FloodSAFE, flood management, flood mapping and levee evaluation. Data alignment also needs to occur, sharing information between departments and with the public. Information is essential for regional efforts and collaboration with state agencies. Programs, data and resources are what need to be aligned. That is coordination is important for local efforts.

Comment: A balanced perspective on streamlined permitting needs to move beyond flood projects and planning. There are Habitat Conservation Plans and Natural Community Conservation Plans that have a broader, more integrated view of biological communities – that include conservation efforts dealing with rivers and streams – and provide streamlined permitting. Historically, streamlined permitting has been associated with



ESA permitting and, in the future, Corps and Water Board permitting. These efforts are smaller in scale and they provide a tremendous and untapped opportunity for flood management.

Comment: In areas with short windows for construction activities, such as Alpine County, “unnecessary delays” can pose risks to life and property.

**ACTION ITEM:** There is additional flexibility in the RMS that can roll these comments forward. This will involve sorting out where comments can be addressed, since the FFR is a specific work product with very specific requirements. The RMS can go beyond that.

Comment: Some recommendations still do not go to the higher level, in terms of needing to align state and regional priorities. Grants and programs will evolve out of State priorities. Once the direction is established, then there is a way to get at the streamlining. Permitting challenges are more likely a symptom, not a cause, of the issue. The cause is the management strategy was not properly set. Looking to streamline will not work if the direction is not well-established.

Comment: It is important to encourage inter-agency coordination. When discussing permitting, it might be better to speak about “programmatic” approaches rather than “streamlining.” Don’t lose this piece and provide a qualification that it may not be appropriate in all cases. Resource conservation districts have thousands of projects that are simple restoration projects (such as fish passage, stream bank restoration and rural road improvements) that do not have major issues. If falling within specifications, programmatic permits would help immensely. People are constrained. Basic permits would increase restoration activities.

Comment: For State agencies, SB 732 requires four agency Secretaries to work together in the Strategic Growth Council to gain efficiencies in areas of overlapping authority – especially at levels regarding statewide land use and planning. The FFR needs to link this with the efforts of the Strategic Growth Council.

Comment: When looking at the IRWM and regional flood planning areas, the challenge here is trying to fit this within the Water Plan, IRWM and IWM frameworks. How does new layer of regions help with IWM? Is there a way to coordinate flood management within the IRWM framework? Or are there unique flood considerations that require specific boundaries?

Comment: The FFR should help clarify DWR’s role and perspective on flood management. It’s unclear whether the document describes current conditions or reports on what was heard. The text seems to go back and forth. As a statewide report, the FFR should reflect DWR’s perspective. You may not always agree with what you heard. The FFR states that implementing agencies are experiencing “unnecessary delays.” It might be helpful to say that “unnecessary delays” sometimes occur and to understand the circumstances around that.



**#2: Establish multiple approaches for reliable funding.** This includes: aligning resources to implement priority projects; assessing/proposing new funding sources; improving access to funding (reference guides, workshops) and increasing funding (new partnerships, reduce costs).

## Discussion

Comment – Beyond inventorying funding sources, this recommendation should also address ways to overcome funding obstacles – that are magnified by the loss of revenue streams for counties and cities. That discussion can be expanded. The appendices explained difficulties, which aren't referenced here. Agencies operate under a charter and may be precluded from being engaged in other activities outside of their jurisdiction and authorization. There needs to be a larger effort than just encouraging agencies to voluntarily partner. (Consider moving forward into the RMS discussion.)

Comment: There is a CalFIRE SRA fee. In local rural areas, communities conduct a self-assessment for fire protection and local fire districts. How willing are communities going to be to pay next time for the local fire district, after paying the SRA fee? This goes back to state-local relationships.

Comment: At the county level, the loss of funding is much more cumulative and occurs at many levels. The Williamson Act provided 12-15% of the Colusa County budget. Statewide, there was a loss of \$32 million in General Fund Fair support. There is a state agency that owes counties over \$20 million for payment-in-lieu-of-taxes. State Parks are closing and suction dredging is being cut down, which reduces tourism. Counties need technical and grant funding if recommendations are to be implemented.

Comment: In certain cases, DWR will not provide funding if planning processes have not been undertaken. Often times, funding is not available for the planning activities. It might be helpful to allow planning to be funded through the grant, with a qualifier that the project won't move forward unless the planning is done.

## Recommendations

**#3: Improve awareness about flood risks to reduce community impacts.** The focus on this recommendation is with expanding and aligning existing Federal, State and local awareness and education initiatives.

## Discussion

Comment: Providing information and outreach to southern California about the importance of infrastructure in the Central Valley.

Comment: There is an RMS on outreach and education. We can shine the light on that in the other RMS.

Comment: There has been increased engagement with Tribes and disadvantaged communities. These audiences will have perspectives about this and want to be involved in outreach on flood.

**ACTION ITEM:** Connect this recommendation with the Outreach and Education RMS.





**#4: Support flood preparedness, response and recovery programs to reduce risks to lives and property.** Action include: increasing agency coordination (among flood responders, facility managers, planners and Federal/State agency representatives); assisting with and conducting flood fight training; identifying and prioritizing emergency response and forecasting data needs and supporting current emergency management plans.

#### Discussion

Comment: There should be a strategy or action to address recovery programs (or else remove the term from the recommendation). Good recovery programs can affect exposure to risk.

Comment: There is a need for more assistance with local flood warning systems and local stream gauges. Forecasting isn't just for emergency response, it also relates to system reoperation and system modeling. There is an opportunity to use that technology for forecast-based operations.

Comment: Input from Tribes and DACs is needed here.

ACTION ITEM: Include a reference to the California Earthquake Authority. (John Moynier will take that back to the Authority.)

**#5: Conduct regional flood assessment to prioritize actions that reduce risk.** This would involve: assessing flood risks for each region; assisting agencies in identifying flood risk reductions goals (which includes discussions on residual risk) and assisting agencies in assessing climate change and sea-level rise impacts.

#### Discussion

Comment: Regional assessments and prioritization point to a need for data for mapping. Is there an opportunity for a state repository of data for flood maps? The FEMA flood risk map would be good information to have statewide. Non-regulatory products are being generated from the risk maps, to help explain flood risk.

Comment: We are behind in the technology. The data is insufficient to support time-studies. FMA is developing models that will be available for floodplain mapping.

Comment: Can a strategy be added to point to how restoration can assist or hampers flood protection. For example, there are complex interactions with the restoration of salt ponds into marshes. There may be other environmental restoration efforts that need to be considered that way.

Comment: Sea-level rise is itself an impact of climate change. Equally important is the change in hydrology, which affects flood timing and peaks.

Comment: If you are talking about Climate Change, as a whole, another consideration is that of biodiversity/habitat change. It might be helpful to call out climate change adaptation – but not get into specifics, which focus on technical issues. (These will also link to RMSs.)

Comment: Initial paragraph could specify risks to life, property and the environment. This will help incorporate resource and environmental priorities into the document.

**#6: Encourage responsible land use planning to reduce impacts to lives and property.**

Related strategies include: improved coordination between planners, floodplain managers and emergency response (at all levels – Federal/State/local); development and use of best



floodplain management practices that local entities would need to implement to receive cost-share funds; and regional outreach with local and regional planning bodies.

## Discussion

Comment: (Strategy 1) Development in local areas yields benefits largely to those doing the development and costs are borne by the last person to buy. This could perhaps inform the strategy.

Comment: Bond funds also help pay the costs of development, which are paid for by the entire state. That encouraged people to think about land use processes might be better integrated with land use decisions.

Comment: While local government has jurisdiction over land use, there are external factors that drive land use. In many counties, state and federal agencies own at least 50% of the land base. In some counties, private lands may only represent 2% of the land base. There are also state mandates that drive a lot of planning.

Comment: There is an inherent tension between a specific flood focus and water management and that probably fits into the recommendations somehow. For recommendation 6, “responsible” is in the eye of the beholder. Natomas development may have been “responsible” from the perspective of proximity to an urban center and vehicle trips. From a floodplain management perspective, that development created separate problems that may be viewed as irresponsible. Is “responsible” defined from the perspective of flood management or land use?

Comment: Looking at Natomas, the requirements around air quality and transportation needs to be considered along with floodplain management considerations. The city and county should consider all of the requirements as a whole. The priorities are not mutually exclusive and should be considered in terms of how they should work together. The challenge is to determine the best way to develop a particular area. What uses are best suited for the area?

Comment: Natomas, AB 32 and sustainable communities come together to demonstrate that there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Alluvial fan systems provide another example. Both cases illustrate trying to work with what is already developed. A totally different situation is determining what type of development will be allowed in the future. Additional development may or may not make sense depending on the circumstances.

Comment: Land use is the only recommendation that uses the term “responsible.” Are the other recommendations irresponsible? Perhaps say, “Encourage land use planning that reduces flood risks to lives and property.” General plan updates are not taking lightly. Regarding land use, there is tension around housing and meeting the regional housing needs assessment.

Comment: This recommendation could be worded to say: “Encourage land use planning practices that reduce adverse impacts to life, property and environment.” or “Encourage land use planning practices that reduce flood risk.”





Comment: There are some issues where local jurisdictions could benefit from some assistance. Model ordinances that incorporate this guidance on floodplain management would be helpful. Also, there is a need to reconcile building codes with NFIP and state and international building codes.

Comment: Natural resource managers should be identified as people who should be contacted. (This applies to recommendations #6 and #7.)

#7: **Use regional planning to establish priority projects.** Key strategies include: improving Federal and State processes for developing, funding and implementing IWM projects; improving coordination between regional water and flood management and examining water and flood management organizational structures to promote multi-benefit projects.

## Discussion

Comment: Consider how flood planning regions relate to IRWM boundaries.

Comment: The first sentence provides a generalization of what was heard from agencies. What is it that DWR wants to say about this issue?

Comment: Consider rewriting this recommendation to emphasize multi-objective planning for water resource management and perhaps removing the priority projects aspect. The essence is about setting flood projects within an IWM approach – and how to frame IFM. There could be a discussion about how flood activities help sustain IWM.

Comment: Natural resource managers should be identified as people who should be contacted. (This applies to recommendations #6 and #7.)

#8: **Reduce project delivery timelines to maximize value to taxpayers.** Related actions include: providing information on flood programs to local agencies; identifying regional flood risk evaluation methods that justify local priorities; supporting local agencies with funding and grant programs for projects with regional benefits; and providing IRWM case studies and lessons learned.

## Discussion

Comment: This should be incorporated into recommendation #7. This is bits and pieces of other recommendations. These actions restate earlier recommendations.

Comment: The language is almost the same as that for recommendation #1.

Comment: It's strange that local agencies don't have a component to strategy #3 (encourage projects with regional benefits). While we encourage regional benefits, there may be projects that provide benefits at a smaller scale (e.g. county or sub-county level) that exceed the benefits associated with a regionally scaled project. Funds should not be diverted from important projects at a smaller scale.

Question: What defines a regional project? Most projects are pretty local in nature.



Comment: From a flood risk viewpoint, regional involves the area where different sources of flooding affect the same area. For the Sacramento area, Natomas could be considered a region. SAFCA could be considered a region. The extent to which a regional project could be developed depends on how well the priorities support the areas to be included, and how well local entities can organize among themselves. “Regional” does not necessarily involve a specific delineation.

Comment: For actions where no local component is identified, at a minimum there should language around incorporating local input.

## **Flood Resource Management Strategy (RMS)**

Other RMSs will have some link to Flood Management. In response to the survey, both watershed management and land use planning and management were identified as important for integrating with the Flood RMS.

A handout provided an outline and description of the major sections for the RMS. A summary of the comments from the February 2<sup>nd</sup> Caucus meeting was attached, listing potential linkages to other RMSs. There was a discussion as to who comprised the audience for the RMSs – are these written for all stakeholders or for water managers? Are there distinctions between flood managers and water supply managers?

It was noted that the term “flood risk management” was used for Update 2009. There was a suggestion to use “floodplain management” for Update 2013. FEMA uses the term “floodplain management” for those who deal with flood risk in an area. There was a comment to have terms that are consistent for the RMS and the FFR TM.

The section on “Potential Benefits” can pull in discussions about IWM and Integrated Natural Resource Management – calling in the floodplains, wildlife and soils. Discussions can also reference other RMSs. The “Cost” section will need to estimate the actual costs of implementation. The figures can be staged – broken out by area – to avoid sticker shock. Information can be pulled from the FFR and then allocated by category or on a per person basis. Alternately, a high-level representation of costs can help keep the discussion from becoming too complicated.

The description of “Major Issues” will help set the stage for recommendations by calling out obstacles to implementation. The “Recommendations” will call out who should be undertaking the action. Recommendations will either enhance benefits or overcome an obstacle. FFR recommendations will be incorporated by reference and RMS recommendations cannot be inconsistent with FFR. All finance recommendations are being pulled from the RMSs and will be addressed in the Finance Plan. There will be reconciliation meeting in July to discuss finance recommendations.



## Action Items and Next Steps

ACTION ITEM: Send out the website link for the RMSs.

ACTION ITEM: Reviewers are to send in comments on other RMSs.

ACTION ITEM: At a future flood caucus meeting, look at opportunities to take research and development concept to the technology caucus.

## Attendance

### In person:

Ali, OPR,  
Karen Buhr, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts  
Cheryl Essex, State Parks  
Bruce Gwynne, Department of Conservation  
Paul Hegedus, Floodplain Management Association, RBF  
John Hopkins, Institute for Ecological Health  
Nick Klassan, consultant  
Nick Konovaloff, Regional Council of Rural Counties  
John Moynier, Dewberry  
Steve Osgood, Dewberry  
Yung-Hsin Sun, MWH  
Iovanka Todd, Floodplain Management Association  
Eric Tsai, MWH  
Terri Wegener, DWR  
Jason Sidley, DWR  
Hoa Ly, DWR  
Lew Moeller, DWR  
Anne Lynch, Ch2mHill

Facilitation: Lisa Beutler, MWH, Executive Facilitator; Judie Talbot, CCP, Facilitation Support

### Via webinar:

Sarah Agahi – County of San Diego  
Ane Deister, Parsons  
Carol Hall, Kleinfelder  
Jim May, Tulare County  
Roger Putty, MWH  
Mike Savage, CVMSmith  
Pat Showalter, Santa Clara  
Steve Stadler, Kings River Conservation District  
Erin Chappel, DWR Climate Change  
Alan Oto, DWR